

Timely Action Measures Guide

Introduction

Many individuals and families we serve are at their point of greatest need when they apply for public assistance. The ability to serve applicants promptly is an important goal and measure of our performance. Most public assistance programs have established application processing standards. To help measure our application processing timeliness the Eligibility Information System is programmed to require entry of a Delay Reason Code when action is taken on an initial or recertification/renewal application past the processing standard date. These codes allow the tracking of application timeliness by program, cause and location, and they generate detailed reports to help monitor and improve our service quality.

It is our responsibility to approve or deny applications within the specified time allowed. It is important to code client and agency-caused delays accurately. The aim is to monitor our timeliness, identify ways to improve procedures and to build a useful record of our performance history. The EIS prompt to enter delay reason codes only occurs when action is taken late on an initial, food stamp expedited service, or recertification/renewal application. Responsibility for overdue action on applications is not always obvious. This guidance is intended to help staff consistently use the appropriate codes. Specific program policy describing application, recertification and review processing standards can be found in the individual program manuals.

Delay Reason Codes:

There are three basic categories or reason codes for assigning proper responsibility for application processing delay:

Client-caused delay can occur when by the 30th day the agency cannot take further action on the application without an action by the applicant. Clients can be responsible for delays beyond the 30 day standard when an interview is missed, or needed verification is due before the 30th day and not provided by the date requested.

Agency-caused delay occurs when the agency has everything needed to determine eligibility and does not approve or deny the application by the 30th day. It also occurs during busy periods when applicant interviews are scheduled out so far that it is not possible to make an eligibility decision by the 30th day.

Third Party-caused delay occurs when eligibility for an APA, IA, or APA-related ME application cannot be determined until there is action taken by a third party. If the eligibility decision is delayed not by the applicant or the agency, but rather, by an external agency it is considered a Third Party delay. For example, delays past day 30 awaiting a determination by the IA Medical Reviewer, or an action by the Social Security Administration are Third Party delays.

A Delay Reason Code must be entered when prompted by EIS. The worker cannot advance beyond the prompt screen until a code is entered. The five codes are:

- AG - Agency-caused delay
- AR - Agency-caused delay due to case being reopened for reconsideration after denial
- CI - Client-caused delay due to client missing or rescheduling interview
- CV - Client-caused delay due to requested verification not received timely

- TP - Delay due to a required action by third party (used for APA, IA, and AP-related ME cases only)

It is important to understand that an applicant missing a scheduled interview appointment or failing to provide complete verification is not necessarily a client-caused delay. By program rules we are obligated to do all that we can do to make an eligibility determination on an application by the 30th day following the date of application. The examples that follow will help illustrate how to code application processing delays and select the proper reason code.

Initial Application Timeliness Standards:

For all programs, initial applications are overdue if not approved or denied by the 30th day from the date of receipt. The responsibility for the delay can be client or agency-caused. No Delay Reason Code is required if the initial application is approved or denied by the 30th day following the date of receipt of the application. Processing rules and guidance for initial applications for each program can be found for: Adult Public Assistance Program at MS 410-5F; Alaska Temporary Assistance Program at MS 705-5F; Family Medicaid at MS 5005-6F; SeniorCare Program at MS 2.1; and for the Food Stamp Program at MS 601-5F.

- The application receipt date by the agency is counted as day 0. (Note: Fee Agent submitted applications start day 0 when received by the DPA office.)
- EIS will prompt the worker for entry of a Delay Reason Code on the 31st day.

Example 1:

Applicant applies on day 0; interviewed on day 15; verification requested to be provided by day 25. Verification provided on day 23.

- Worker takes timely action by day 30 – no delay reason code is required.
- Worker acts after day 30 – use agency-caused delay code AG.

Example 2:

Applicant applies on day 0; interviewed on day 15; verification requested to be provided by day 25. Verification is then provided late on day 28.

- Worker takes timely action by day 30 – no delay reason code is required.
- Worker acts after day 30 – agency-cause delay use reason code - AG.

If the worker denies the application on day 26 for failure to provide verification, there would have been no delay reason code. However, when the verification came in on day 28, the agency is required to reconsider the denial.

- Worker acts on the reconsideration by day 30 – no delay reason code required.
- Worker acts on the reconsideration after day 30 – use agency-caused delay code AR.

Example 3:

Applicant applies on day 0; attends scheduled interview on day 25; verification requested by day 35. The client provides the verification to the agency on day 32.

- Worker acts on day 32 or later – use agency-caused delay code AG.

Example 4:

Applicant applies on day 0; interview is scheduled and held on day 13; application is pended for additional verification to be returned by day 23; insufficient verification is received on day 22 and needed verification requested by day 32.

- Verification received on day 28 and worker takes action on day 32 – use agency-caused delay code AG.
- Verification received on day 31 – use client-caused delay code CV.

Example 5:

Applicant applies on day 0; interview scheduled for day 12; applicant misses the interview; applicant contacts agency on day 22 for another interview and an appointment is scheduled and conducted on day 25.

- Applicant information is complete, and eligibility decision made by day 30 – no delay reason code required.
- Applicant is given until day 35 to provide additional verification; verification is received on day 30 and applicant is determined eligible on day 32 - agency-caused delay use code AG.
- Applicant is given until day 35 to provide additional verification; verification is received and eligibility determined on day 33 - client-cause delay use reason code CV.

Example 6: (Food Stamp Program Only – 60-day application timeframe policy)

Applicant applies on day 0; does not show for scheduled interview. Notice of missed interview sent. Request for service denied automatically by EIS on day 30. Applicant comes in on day 35 to schedule another interview. An interview occurs on day 40, and verification is requested by day 50. Verification provided on day 48.

- First month denied - use client-caused delay code CI.
- Second month approved – use client-caused delay code CI.

Note: Both months should be coded as household-caused delays, regardless of when worker takes action.

Example 7: (Food Stamp Program Only – 60-day application timeframe policy)

Applicant applies on day 0; attends scheduled interview on day 15; and verification requested by day 25.

- Worker acts by day 30 to deny the applications for no verification – no delay reason code.
- Worker acts after day 30 – use agency-caused delay code AG.

Verification is then provided late on day 35. The agency is required to reconsider the denial since the verification came in by day 60.

- First month denied – use client-caused delay code CV.
- Second month approved – use client-caused delay code CV.

Note: Both months should be coded as household-caused delays, regardless of when worker takes action.

Example 8:

Applicant applies for Adult Public Assistance on day 0; interviewed on day 15; verification requested includes a DDS packet to be provided by day 25; verification provided on day 23.

- Worker makes an eligibility decision by day 30 – no delay reason code is required.
- Worker holds pending application and the DDS decision is received on day 90 – use third-party delay code TP.

Food Stamp Program: Expedited Service

Expedited service food stamps applications must be identified and a decision made to approve or deny the application by the 4th day following the date it is received at the DPA office.

When food stamp applications are received they must be screened and those qualifying for expedited service must be registered with a “Y” on the REAP or APMA screen to identify it as an expedited service case. It is important that the expedited service indicator is accurate. If the application is coded improperly at initial screening, it should be changed to the proper status. An incorrect expedited service code cannot be changed once the worker has passed through the FSAD screen. In this situation, contact the EIS Help Desk to alter the expedited service eligibility code.

For expedited service eligible food stamp applications:

- The application filing date is day 0.
- On day 5 and beyond EIS will require entry of a Delay Reason Code.
- Agency-caused delays occur when the agency has everything needed to determine eligibility by the 4th day, and does not approve or deny the application by the 4th day.
- Client-caused delays occur when the agency does not have everything it needs to determine eligibility by the 4th day due to the action or inaction by the applicant. This could be applicant failure to attend a scheduled interview, or provide identification.

Example 9:

Applicant applies on day 0, and appears to qualify for expedited service. The applicant is scheduled for an interview on day 3, but fails to appear for the interview. The applicant returns to the office on day 5 for a stand-by interview and is approved for food stamps. This is a client-caused delay. Use the delay code CI.

Example 10:

An application is received in the DPA office, and identified as an expedited food stamp case (day 0). The client interview is scheduled and held on day 5. This is an agency-caused delay. Use delay code AG.

Food Stamp Program: Recertification Applications

Processing rules and guidance for food stamp recertification applications can be found in the Food Stamp Program Manual at MS 604-2B.

Food stamp recertification applications filed by the 15th day of the last month of the certification period:

- Worker must approve or deny by the last day of the certification period.
- Delay reason code prompt will come up on the 1st day of the month following the expiration of the certification period.

- Agency-caused delays occur when the agency has everything it needs to determine eligibility by the last day of the certification period and does not approve or deny the application by the last day of the certification period.
- Client-caused delays occur when the agency took timely action, yet it does not have all it needs from the applicant to determine eligibility by the last day of the certification period.

Example 11:

Recertification received by the 15th day of last month of certification period. Interview held and all verification provided before end of certification period.

- Worker processes recertification before the end of the certification period – no delay code is required.
- Worker processes recertification after the end of the certification period – use agency-caused delay code AG.

Example 12:

Recertification received by the 15th day of the last month of certification period. Interview scheduled before end of certification period; client fails to attend.

- Interview is rescheduled for the next available date, which is after end of certification period; client attends and provides all verification. Worker determines eligibility on same day – client-caused delay use reason code CI.
- Interview is rescheduled for the next available date, which is after end of certification period and client attends. Verification is requested and provided 10 days from interview date. Worker processes case same day – client-caused delay use reason code CI.

Food stamp recertification applications filed between the 16th and end of the last month of the certification period:

- The recertification application filing date is Day 0.
- Worker must approve or deny the application by Day 30.
- A delay reason code prompt will come up on or after the 31st day.
- Agency-caused delays occur when the agency has all it needs to determine eligibility by the 30th day, and does not approve or deny the application by the 30th day.
- Client-caused delays occur when the agency has done its part timely, yet does not have all it needs from the applicant to determine eligibility by the 30th day.

Example 13:

Recertification application received after the 16th of the last month of the certification period. Interview is held and verification received after the end of certification period.

- Worker processes recertification within 30 days of filing date - no delay code is required.
- Worker processes recertification 32 days from filing date – agency-caused delay use reason code AG.

Alaska Temporary Assistance, Adult Public Assistance, Medicaid and SeniorCare Review / Renewal Applications

Processing rules and guidance for renewal applications for each program can be found for: Alaska Temporary Assistance Program at MS 790-8; and Adult Public Assistance Program at MS 480-1E.

Worker must approve or deny the review application by the 30th day.

- Delay reason code prompt will come up on the 31st day.
- Agency-caused delays occur when the agency has everything it needs to determine continued eligibility by the 30th day, and does not approve or deny the review application by the 30th day.
- Household-caused delays occur when the agency does not have everything it needs to determine continued eligibility by the 30th day.
- Third Party-caused delay occurs when eligibility for an APA, IA, or APA-related ME review application cannot be determined until there is action taken by a third party. If the eligibility decision is delayed not by the applicant or the agency, but by an external agency, it is considered a Third Party delay.

Example 14:

Review/Renewal application received before last day of review month. All needed verification is provided with the review form.

- Worker makes an eligibility decision by day 30 – no delay code is required.
- Worker determines eligibility on day 36 – agency-caused delay use reason code AG.

Example 15:

Review/Renewal application is received by the last day of the month following case closure for failure to submit a review form on time. Verification is provided with the new review form received on day 0. The Review/Renewal will be registered and processed as a new application.

- Worker determines eligibility by day 30 – no delay code is required.
- Worker processes after 30 days from filing date – agency-caused delay use reason code AG.

Example 16:

Review/Renewal application is received by the last day of the month following case closure for failure to submit a review form on time, but it lacks needed verification. A notice is sent giving the applicant 10 days to provide the requested verification.

- The applicant provides verification within 10 days and before day 30. Worker determines eligibility before day 30 – no delay code is required.
- Client submits verification within 10 days on day 35. The worker processes it on day 40 when it is received – use client caused code CV.